



# Recycling Lines

Electronic Newsletter

**JUNE 2011**

## *Virginia Department of Environmental Quality*

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DEQ's Community Involvement Initiative: The Department of Environmental Quality is dedicated to helping the public better understand DEQ's role in protecting the environment, and to involving the public more effectively in environmental decision making.

**Welcome to Recycling Lines.** If you have suggestions on future topics for the newsletter, please send the information to Steve Coe at [steve.coe@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:steve.coe@deq.virginia.gov).

### **Recycling Markets Development Council (RMDC)**

The 2011 General Assembly passed two bills, HB 2520 and SB 1471, eliminating a number of Councils and Boards. One of these was the Recycling Markets Development Council, a 16 member advisory council. The RMDC appointees, representing a wide range of recyclable commodities, local government, and industry, worked to maximize the markets for Virginia collected recyclables and to further the growth of recycling in the Commonwealth.

Established in 1995, the Council tried to provide regular forums on market issues and recycling infrastructure improvement. When local governments raised the issue of a one-size-fits-all recycling mandate, the RMDC hosted regional public meetings to better understand the recycling concerns of rural Virginia. Due to its efforts, the information gathered resulted in the passage of a bill creating a two-tiered recycling mandate for local governments of 15% and 25%. Localities with a population base of less than 100 persons per square mile or with an unemployment rate of at least 50% above the state unemployment rate were required to meet a 15% recycling rate, while all others were required to meet the original 25% mandated rate.

The RMDC will host one more meeting on June 15<sup>th</sup> in the offices of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission. The agenda is expected to include a discussion of the potential siting of a glass beneficiation plant in the state, the potential to continue working on markets development or promotion through a subcommittee of the Virginia Recycling Association, and an evaluation of Virginia's current recycling efforts and needs.

For more information on the Council, the meeting location and time, or recycling initiatives, contact Steve Coe at 804-698-4029 or [steve.coe@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:steve.coe@deq.virginia.gov).

### **Did You Know?**

- Roughly two-thirds of the nation's restaurateurs have recycling programs as part of their sustainability efforts, according to a new study conducted by the National Restaurant Association.
- New numbers from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, highlighted by the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, show that the recycling industry added more than 12,000 jobs between the first quarter of 2010 and the first quarter of 2011.

### **SERDC offers Summer Recycling Web Seminars**

The Southeast Recycling Development Council is hosting a series of recycling web seminars to help raise the understanding of recycling markets and tools available to improve recycling programs across the southeast U.S.

The next two webinars are:

#### **June 1, 2:00 – 3:30 PM EST: Electronics Recycling: Tips and Tools for Increased E-Scrap Collection.**

Speakers will address: 1) Key tips electronics recyclers wish communities knew; 2) Lessons learned from successful community programs; 3) An overview of policies and trending for electronics management in the Southeast; 4) Choosing an ethical and environmentally-friendly contractor in this regional and international marketplace.

#### **June 28, 2:00 – 3:30 PM EST: Rural Recycling: Addressing Concerns Specific to Rural Communities.**

Speakers will address: 1) Technology updates; 2) Accepting non-traditional materials; 3) Education and outreach on a dime; 4) Using "milk runs" to pool material.

For more information and to register for these webinars, visit the SERDC website at [www.SERDC.org](http://www.SERDC.org).

### **Calendar of Events**

**June 15:** Recycling Markets Development Council meeting, 9211 Forest Hill Avenue, Richmond 23235. 10 am until noon.

## Model Bale Specifications Aim to Ease Collection and Recycling of More Types of Plastics

APR Active in Supporting the Growth of Rigid Non-Bottle Recycling Opportunities in North America

The ever-expanding variety of new and creative types of plastic packaging can create collection and recovery difficulties for community recycling programs and material recovery facilities (MRFs). The Association of Postconsumer Plastics Recyclers (APR) is working to ease those concerns with the establishment of new model bale specifications for the collection of "Bulky Rigid Plastics" and "Tubs and Lids."

"These new model bale specifications allow the recycling industry a common vocabulary," explains APR Rigid Recycling Director Liz Bedard. "By clearly identifying commodities that have a growing domestic market, we can begin to increase the collection and recycling of these valuable plastic materials."

The bale specifications come on the tail of a year-long study evaluating types of non-bottle plastics bales being generated in North America. "We regularly hear from community leaders that their households are calling for more recycling opportunities for materials like yogurt and margarine tubs. Those containers are often made out of polypropylene, a resin very present in the material stream and with a growing recycling market," says APR Executive Director Steve Alexander.

Since communities and business must be strategic in their decision to expand collection of new materials, APR has initially focused on model bale specifications for non-bottle rigid plastics that have strong domestic markets. "Just as communities are interested in expanding the types of materials they collect, our business and industry partners are also interested additional clean recyclable materials. Bulky plastic items such as 5 gallon buckets are a good and steady sources of recoverable and recyclable material," explains APR Chairman Scott Saunders.

APR looks to educate the recycling industry about the new model bale specifications through a variety of actions including the APR website, webinars, market lists and case studies. Creating the model specifications is just the first step in affecting current recycling rates in North America.

MRF managers are invited to join APR for a web seminar on the new specifications on June 2, 2011 at 2:00EDT. [Register at this link: https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/629897790](https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/629897790)

These two specifications are the first in a series of new model specifications for bales that contain non-bottle rigid plastics. APR will continue ongoing work to secure specifications for other material streams that are primed for steady growth.

Visit APR for more information at <http://plasticsrecycling.org/rigid-plastics>.

## New Plastics Recycling Facility to Open in Virginia

Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell recently announced that Continental Waste Management LLC, based in Raleigh, N.C., is investing \$6 million to establish a post-industrial and post-consumer plastic recycling plant in Covington, Va. The company also will produce plastic and wood composite products at the facility.

The new plant is expected to create 100 new jobs for the region, and will put a former industrial property back into productive use. Key to the selection of this site was that the company will have access to a facility infrastructure that meets its production and recycling needs, and the region can provide an available workforce to fill the new jobs. The new operation will take over roughly 25 percent of an idled plastics extrusion facility in Covington.

Continental Waste Management's operation will produce PET (polyethylene terephthalate) flake and pellet and molded plastic products for worldwide markets. The Covington manufacturing plant will begin operation in early summer of 2011 on a small scale, with full operation expected to start in 12 months. When fully operational, the facility should be able to process between 50,000 to 60,000 tons of plastic per year.

To assist in the project, McDonnell approved a \$150,000 grant from the Governor's Opportunity Fund. Through its Virginia Jobs Investment Program, the Virginia Department of Business Assistance will provide funding and services to support the company's recruitment and training activities.

## Sustainable Thinking and Action

Everywhere you look now you will see promotions on the "green" movement and products that are "greener" than before. What exactly does this mean to you? Do you read the labels to see if there are preservatives in your food? Do you buy "organic" to avoid chemicals? Does your workplace buy and use recycled content paper? Do you wonder if disposable diapers are better than cloth ones? Do you drive a "green" car?

Sometimes we hear on news shows or read in the paper about the new things we can and should do to preserve our Earth for our kids. Remember the phrase that "we do not own the Earth, we are only borrowing it from future generations"? Is the world we live in now as clean and as healthy as it was as we were growing up? Do you reminisce about the "good ole days"? Have you changed your lifestyle to be an environmental steward?

So here we are. Do we practice "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle"? I hope so. There are a lot of issues that want to wear us down as we go through our day, week, and year. Individual responsibility can go a long way if practiced by a lot of people, and thinking before doing can only help us make better decisions on how what we do impacts the environment. Paper or Plastic? Just recycle it all and we'll be better for it. Fuel efficient cars? Use public transportation and reduce your environmental footprint. Sustainability means taking only what you need, and leaving the rest for others.

## VDOT Uses Recycled Material in new Highway Project

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is rehabilitating a 3.7-mile, two-lane section of southbound Interstate 81 in Augusta County between exits 217 and 213. It is using a specific combination of reconstruction processes to recycle and reuse existing pavement material for the first time on such a project in the United States.

The processes are cold in-place recycling, cold central-plant recycling and full-depth reclamation. This project will save VDOT millions of dollars by reusing the resources at hand, rather than buying and transporting tons of new material to the site and disposing of the old. The contract award amount for this in-place pavement recycling project is **\$7.64 million**.

VDOT's research division, the Virginia Center for Transportation Innovation and Research (VCTIR), will issue a report in spring 2011 about three pilot projects using full-depth reclamation. VCTIR will also study the asphalt recycling processes used in this pavement project. The structure of the roadway includes three layers:

- Hot-mix asphalt – 10-12 inches deep, combination of driving surface and underlying asphalt (top)
- Compacted stone aggregate – 10-12 inches deep (middle)
- Compacted subgrade – soil (base)

Sources of savings for I-81 in-place pavement recycling project:

- Fuel: Reduces transport of new and old materials
- Materials: Reuses existing materials; eliminates need for third lane and other infrastructure additions for project
- Time: In-place pavement recycling will take 3-4 months. Traditional paving/rehabilitation method using new materials would take 2-3 years.
- Safety: Reduces work-zone congestion, now and for future maintenance and worker safety
- Extended service life: Rebuilt pavement structure is now stronger to withstand heavy traffic loads

## Web Links of Interest:

[http://www.americanchemistry.com/s\\_plastics/bin.asp?CID=1211&DID=11911&DOC=FILE.PDF](http://www.americanchemistry.com/s_plastics/bin.asp?CID=1211&DID=11911&DOC=FILE.PDF) (Report on conversion of plastics into fuel through pyrolysis)

<http://www.restaurantsrecycle.com> (information on recycling by restaurants in the U.S.)

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